

Discussion in working groups

Topic: Identifying and developing leadership talent

- ✓ Developing and identifying leadership talent is an adaptive challenge – not a technical one – therefore it is difficult to provide clear and concrete answers to the workshop topic.
- ✓ Developing leadership talent is very important because leaders are frequently people who are promoted to higher positions in advance of being identified as potential leaders. So we need to focus more on training and developing people who are already in the role.
- ✓ It is hard to choose people with leadership talent during the recruitment process as potential leaders may not have applied. In some cases the selection bodies have not been adequately trained to look for leadership talent.
- ✓ In some cases people are promoted to higher positions without adequate preparation. In some countries senior people are promoted on the basis of their expertise. They need training in order to feel comfortable in the role of leader and to balance this role with that of expert.
- ✓ It is important not to waste the professionalism and substantial input they can make. So we have an obligation to train and develop them.
- ✓ Sometimes we even punish people with leadership. Again, in some situations experts who want to be promoted must become heads of units/managers and this can act as a disincentive.
- ✓ The group then tried to define leadership and what it means to be a leader. There were different interpretations and expectations of those in senior positions. Some of these expectations are imposed by the political system, use of ministerial advisors and public administration reform initiatives.
- ✓ There was consensus that we should acknowledge that countries differ a lot from each other when it comes to the identification of leadership talent.

- ✓ Leaders have to be competent but again it is hard to define a concrete set of competences that everybody can accept regardless of leadership roles.
- ✓ There was a discussion about public vs. private sector leadership and a view that the public sector is different and leaders are not motivated by profit and it is more difficult to measure the result of effective leadership.
- ✓ Then the group shared the best aspects of approaches to leadership development. There was a consensus that it has/ought to include:
 - Customized programs, which meet the needs of the organization/department/client;
 - A mechanism for transferring learning to the work place;
 - An action learning element;
 - Follow-up;
 - Coaching and 360 feedback;
 - A combination of methods.
- ✓ There was a sharing of understanding on the case-in-point method. This approach is viewed by some as the particular pedagogy/andragogy to use. When discussing the problem, the point was made that different channels should be used to touch leaders at the level of head, heart and guts.